

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. They are also using two people who were actively involved in the Swift Boat anti-Kerry ads. This is not playing the game fairly! Should we get into playing other games like having another station air an anti-Bush movie about his skipping out on the National Guard? Should we make our elections uglier and more negative than they already are? That's what the Sinclair airing seems to be hinting at.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.